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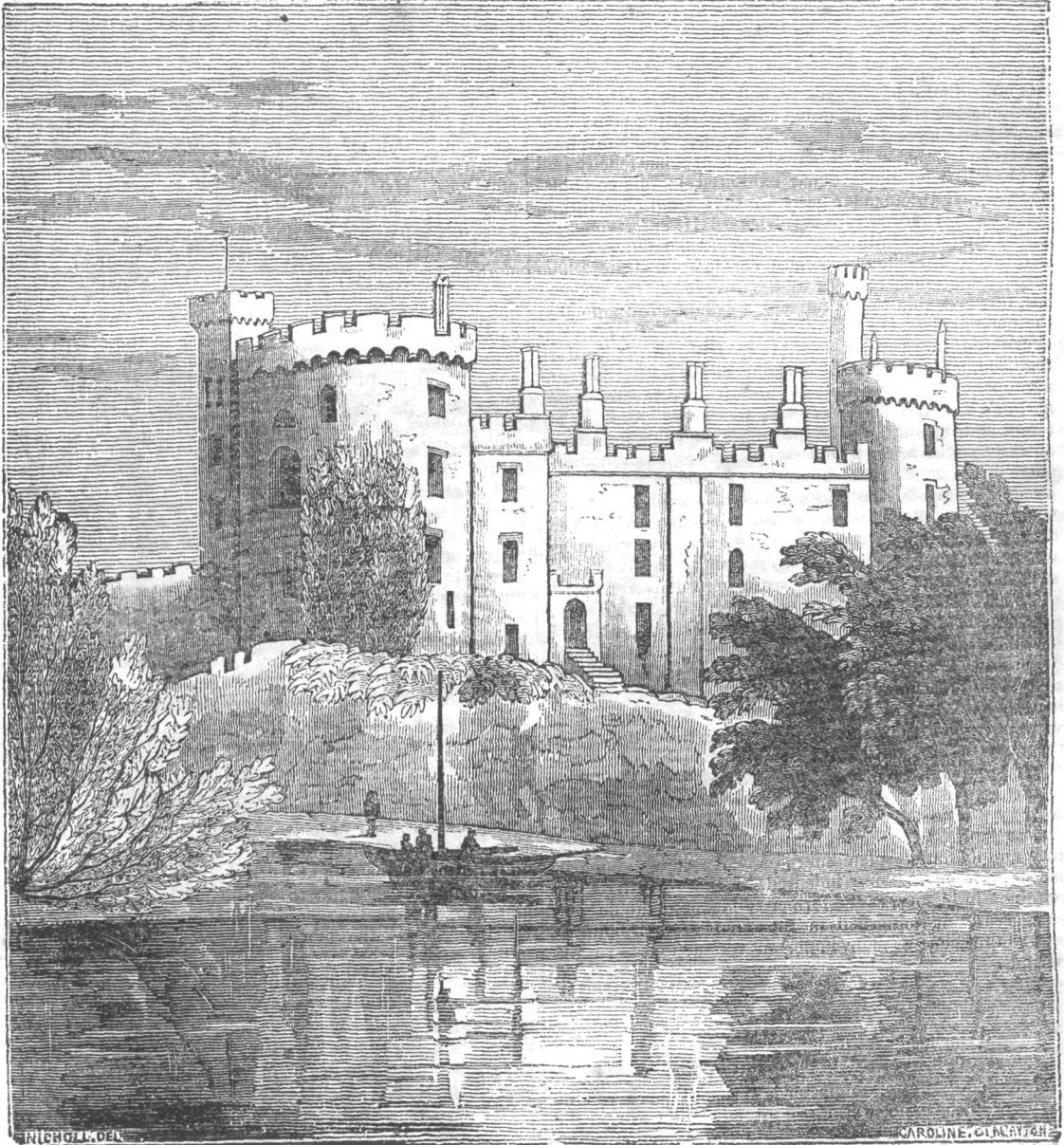
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Nothing so much injures the memory as habits of inattention. Cursory reading, where the mind makes no effort to recollect, but remains nearly passive while it just receives the impressions which vanish almost as soon as they are made, is sufficient to destroy a memory even naturally good. There is a remarkable instance of memory told of a famous Roman orator, who having attended an auction for an entire day, distinctly recollected every article which

was put up for sale, the name of the purchaser, and the price at which it was knocked down. There is no doubt, but that attention, earnestness, a sort of steady fixedness of mind while we are employed in intellectual pursuits, are the chief sources of a good memory. How anxious, then, should we be to cultivate and improve that talent, which is the most valuable, inasmuch as without it all other talents lose much of their force and vigour.



KILKENNY CASTLE.

A side view and description of this ancient baronial edifice, for centuries the residence of the Butler or Ormonde family, was given in an early number of our first volume. As, however, it was not considered to give a fair representation of the building, we have, at the request of a friend, inserted the above accurate sketch.

In addition to the description of the Castle already given in the number referred to, we may remark, that the building occupies two sides of a quadrangle, and retains three round towers of the ancient castle, worked into spacious additions made by the first Duke of Ormonde. The chief front opens to a garden, in which were formerly a fountain, and other decorations, in the style of a warmer

and less variable climate than that of Ireland. "The interior," says Mr. Brewer, in his beauties of Ireland, "like the external features of this structure, has not experienced any important alterations since the latter part of the seventeenth century, and may be viewed as a curious example of the modes of disposal and decoration which then prevailed. The apartments are very numerous, but inconvenient, and ill-adapted to the accommodation of a noble family in modern times. Beauty of proportion is not studied in any instance; and the arrangements for dignified entertainment are so deficient in method and extent, that we find, with surprise, the building, in its present state, was once the seat of splendour conspicuous in national

history, and the mansion in which the first Duke of Ormonde often entertained at his table two hundred gentlemen."

The collection of paintings at this castle has long constituted one of its principal attractions; and, as regards portraits, is still entitled to attentive examination; but many of the best pictures, on subjects of more general interest, have been removed. The Gallery is about 180 feet in length, but, like many similar apartments, designed in a past age for parade and the dance, rather than the judicious display of pictures, is greatly disproportionate in width.

The windows of the gallery, and of several other principal apartments, admit noble and captivating views over the city and a great extent of landscape. Kilkenny, from these windows, stands displayed with peculiar felicity; all its attractive buildings being exhibited in fine combinations, whilst the meaner parts are shut from observation.

Here, in 1399, was King Richard II. entertained for fourteen days. On the 23d of March, 1650, Oliver Cromwell invested Kilkenny with a considerable army. The garrison was much reduced by the ravages of the plague; but, however thin their numbers, a gallant spirit animated the defendants. On the following day the assailants endeavoured to gain possession of Irishtown, but were repulsed, and, early on the morning of the 25th, their cannon opened on the castle. A breach was effected about mid-day, but the besiegers were twice beaten off, on attempting to profit by that opportunity, and the breach was quickly repaired. It is said that Cromwell, apprehending a longer resistance than suited the expedition necessary in his military plans, was on the point of quitting the place, when he received overtures from the mayor and townsmen, who offered to admit him into the city. A parley was beaten, and a cessation agreed on at twelve o'clock next day, when the town and castle were delivered up.

The articles of capitulation were highly creditable to the garrison; and it is recorded, that Sir Walter Butler and his officers, when they marched out, were complimented by Cromwell, who said, "that they were gallant fellows; that he had lost more men in storming that place than he had in taking Drogheda; and that he should have gone without it, had it not been for the treachery of the townsmen." The first of Cromwell's high courts of justice met at Kilkenny, on the 4th of October, 1652; and it is a curious fact, that this court occupied the identical chambers used by the supreme Catholic council in 1642.

The fabric, viewed as a whole, impresses ideas of dignity and baronial splendour; for which it may be, perhaps, in some measure indebted to the renown it has obtained in history, as the former residence of noble persons greatly distinguished in the annals of their country, and as the scene of many important transactions at various periods.

THE POOKA.

"Goblins haunt from fire or fen,
Or mine, or flood, to the walks of men."—Collins.

Now that "the schoolmaster is abroad," there can be no question that the warm sun of education will, in the course of a very few years, dissipate those vapours of superstition, whose wild and shadowy forms have from time immemorial thrown a mysterious mantle around our mountain summits, shed a darker horror through our deepest glens, traced some legendary tale on each unchiselled column of stone that rises on our bleakest hills, and peopled the green border of the wizard stream and sainted well with beings of a spiritual world. While, however, the friends of Ireland cannot but be pleased in thinking that our peasantry should, from being better informed, renounce their belief in these idle tales of superstition, to which they, unfortunately, have for centuries been taught to listen with delight, to the exclusion of matters more rational and more important; it is to be hoped that the two prominent features of our antiquity as a nation, will not be altogether lost sight of—namely, our vernacular language, and those extraordinary legends, which are esteemed by many as going a great length to prove—from their remarkable analogy with the tales of

the eastern world—our oriental descent. Although "the good people" still retain a most respectable footing, a peasant may now travel from Cape Clear to Cunnemara without encountering that once dreaded personage, a ghost. Even the *Pooka*, or Irish goblin, has not for the last forty years, as far as our recollection serves, been known to shake the dripping ooze from his hairy hide, to approach the haunts of men, or to practise by the conscious light of the moon, like the fairies and satyrs of heathen mythology, any of those unlucky tricks upon his mortal neighbours, for which he was at one period so much dreaded in many portions of our island.

The Pooka is described as a frisky mischievous being, having such a turn for roguish fun, as to induce him to be all night in wait for the *carough* returning over the moor from the pleasures of the card-table, or for the frequenter of wakes. His usual appearance was that of a sturdy pony, with a shaggy hide. He generally lay couched like a cat in the pathway of the unfortunate pedestrian, then starting between his legs, he hoisted the unlucky wretch aloft on his crupper, from which no shin-breaking rushings by stone walls, no furious driving through white-thorn hedges, or life-shaking plunges down cliff and quagmire, could unseat him. The first crowing of the March cock respited the sorrowful rider, who generally ended this dear-bought tour by a tremendous fling from the pooka's back into some deep bog-hole, or thorny-brake, where ten thousand prickles reared their points to drink the blood of his bruised and broken flesh. On the other hand, he is reported to commiserate the lot of the benighted traveller; and there are some instances on record of his having gently trotted beneath the way-faring cottager for many a mile to the neighbourhood of the well-remembered cabin on the heath.

Feah-a-Pooka, in the county of Kerry, was, as its name imports, the haunt of one of those imaginary monsters. This feah, or marsh, belonged to Tim Dorney, a snug farmer, whose ancestors for many years occupied the adjacent farm, and who, honest men, in that golden age, never found it necessary to disturb the goblin in the favourite haunt, by reclaiming his dreary abode. But when the farm which his grandfather tilled came into Tim Dorney's occupation, a taste for improvement, and the necessary expenditure of a large and increasing family, induced him to cross-cut Feah-a-Pooka by drains and ditches; and two summers had hardly passed, when this haunt of the wild goose and the dark mischievous goblin, afforded a heavy sward of hay, and firm footing for man and beast. The pooka, thus beaten up and driven from the marsh, naturally turned his thoughts to the meditation of revenge on him who, with profane hand, rent asunder that sacred veil which the superstition of ages had woven round the dreaded spot.

Tim was a painstaking, industrious peasant, and accustomed to traverse his farm every night, to ascertain that no neighbouring cattle trespassed on his ground. One night, as he returned along the border of the marsh, he saw something shaped like a dark-coloured, long-tailed pony lie in the narrow way, directly across his path; and before he could slip aside, to shun the lurking apparition, the pooka (for it was he) suddenly started between the legs of the terrified farmer, and bore him off the ground. The goblin rushed along with the speed of the whirlwind, and Tim's first moment of reflection was employed in a fruitless attempt to fling himself to the ground; but he found that some invisible hand had bound him to the back of his supernatural enemy. It would be tedious to recount the hard rubbings against stone walls, and the wild rushings through quickset hedges, that Tim Dorney endured, while the rapidity of his flight completely deprived him of breath and utterance. At last they rushed towards a tall cliff, which frowned in horrid gloom above the deep river, and intercepted, by its giant bulk, the yellow light of the moon that gilt the mountain tops, quivered in the rustling foliage of the trees, and, brightening in its advance, burnished the trembling waters with liquid fire. The pooka pushed with unabated speed to the edge of the rock—then suddenly stopped, as if to add to the death-pang of his agonised victim, by a previous view of the fearful height and the dark waves that curled among the pointed